1980

Only a Year Ago DTA Caboose was Just Another Crazy Dream

Following is a list of the caboose donors who did a great deal to make that crazy dream into a reality. If you are part of this loyal support group and still have not scheduled your private use of the facility, please contact Tom Dodd soon.

Mrs. Elizabeth Reiman
Lawrence Salliotte
Ypsilanti Jaycees
Michigan Alternative Alert System, Inc.
Ms. Karen S. Clark
Tom and Bettie Dodd
Gene G. Fries
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Harrington
Linda Kortesoja Klenszar
John & Shirley Kornilakis
Franklin Leimbach
Gary & Carolyn McKeever
Jack Miller
Donald W. Moore
Rex & Sally Richie
Mrs. Deana Riley
Curtis Salisbury
Don & Bev Shankwiler
Stephen Shutt
Ms. Kathe Stears
The Waite Family
Don & Delores Wallacker
Ypsilanti Board of Realtors
Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation
Ypsilanti Jaycettes
Peter J. Murdock
Kathy & Cal Trammell
James & Jerry Patt
Rich Baird
Margaret Smith
John E. Fitzharris

The caboose is neither completed nor paid for at this time. More help is still needed. Let us know of your interest in this Depot Town project and we'll gladly help to design a plan for your help and assistance on this exciting project.

We reprint the following piece of anonymous prose from a book published in 1880. Others in the book easily fall into the "old chestnuts" category of Victorian literature. We had never heard this one before. Apparently it was once popular, then quickly forgotten. Its reference to the Michigan Central, Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti first brought it to our attention. Where else does local history surface? Does anyone have a copy of the old song, "I've Got an Auntie, Lives in a Shanty, in Yip-Si-Lanti"? Sounds like it might place in the top-ten in Depot Town.

The Last Station

He had been sick at one of the hotels for three or four weeks, and the boys on the road dropped in daily to see how he got along, and to learn if they could render him any kindness. The brakeman was a good fellow, and one and all encouraged him in the hope that he would pull through. The doctor didn't regard the case as dangerous; but the other day the patient began sinking, and it was seen that he could not live the night out. A dozen of his friends sat in the room when night came, but his mind wandered, and he did not recognize them.

It was near one of the depots, and after the great trucks and noisy drays had ceased rolling by, the bells and the short, sharp whistles of the yard-engines sounded painfully loud. The patient had been very quiet for half an hour, when he suddenly unclosed his eyes, and shouted: —

"Kal-a-ma-zoo!"

One of the men brushed the hair back from the cold forehead, and the brakeman closed his eyes, and was quiet for a time. Then the wind whirled around the depot and banged the blinds on the window of his room, and he lifted his hand, and cried out: —

"Jack-son! Passengers going north by the Saginaw Road change cars!"

The men understood. The brakeman thought he was coming east on the Michigan Central. The effort seemed to have greatly exhausted him, for he lay like one dead for the next five minutes, and a watcher felt for his pulse to see if life had not gone out. A tug going down the river sounded her whistle loud and long, and the dying brakeman opened his eyes, and called out: —

"Ann Arbor!"

He had been over the road a thousand times, but had made his last trip. Death was drawing a spectral train over the old track, and he was brakeman, engineer, and conductor.

One of the yard engineers uttered a shrill whistle of warning, as if the glare of the headlight had shown to the engineer some stranger in peril, and the brakeman called out: —

"Yp-silanti! Change cars here for the Eel River Road!"

"He is coming in fast," whispered one of the men.

"And the end of his 'run' will be the end of his life," said a second.

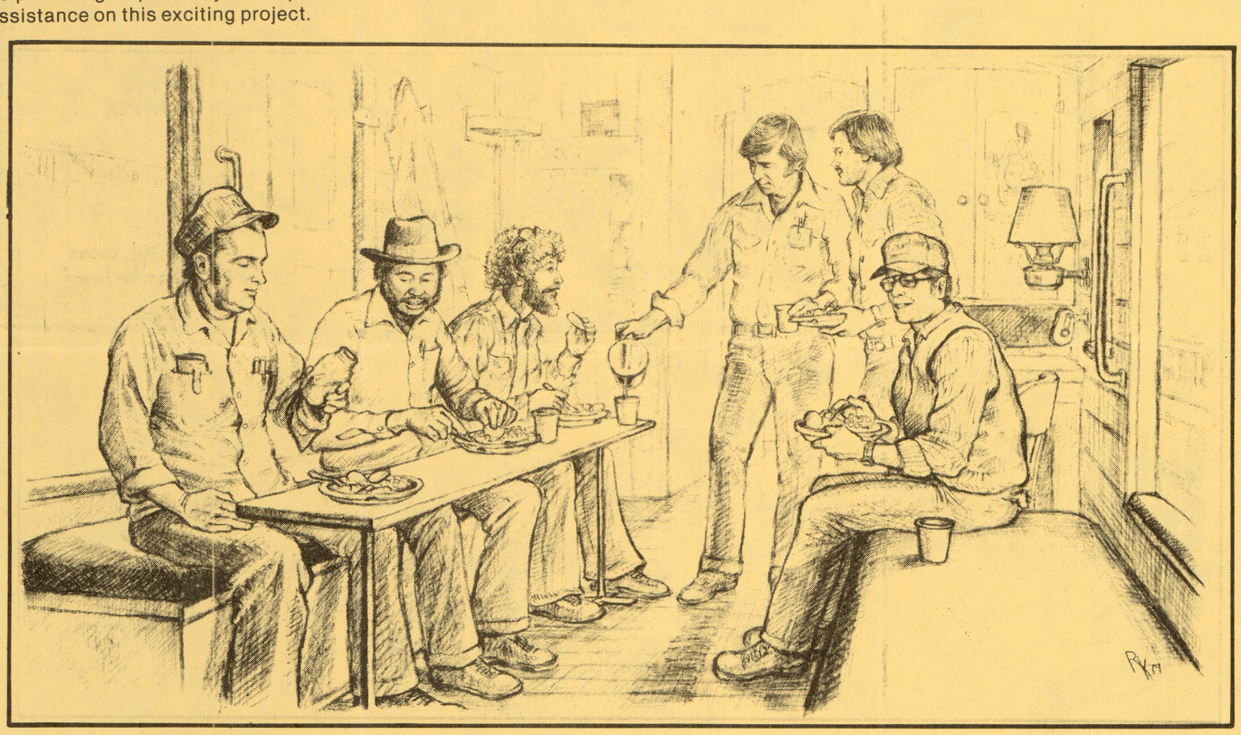
The dampness of death began to collect on the patient's forehead, and there was that ghastly look on the face that death always brings. The slamming of a door down the hall startled him again, and he moved his head, and faintly said: —

"Grand Trunk Junction! Passengers going east by the Grand Trunk change cars!"

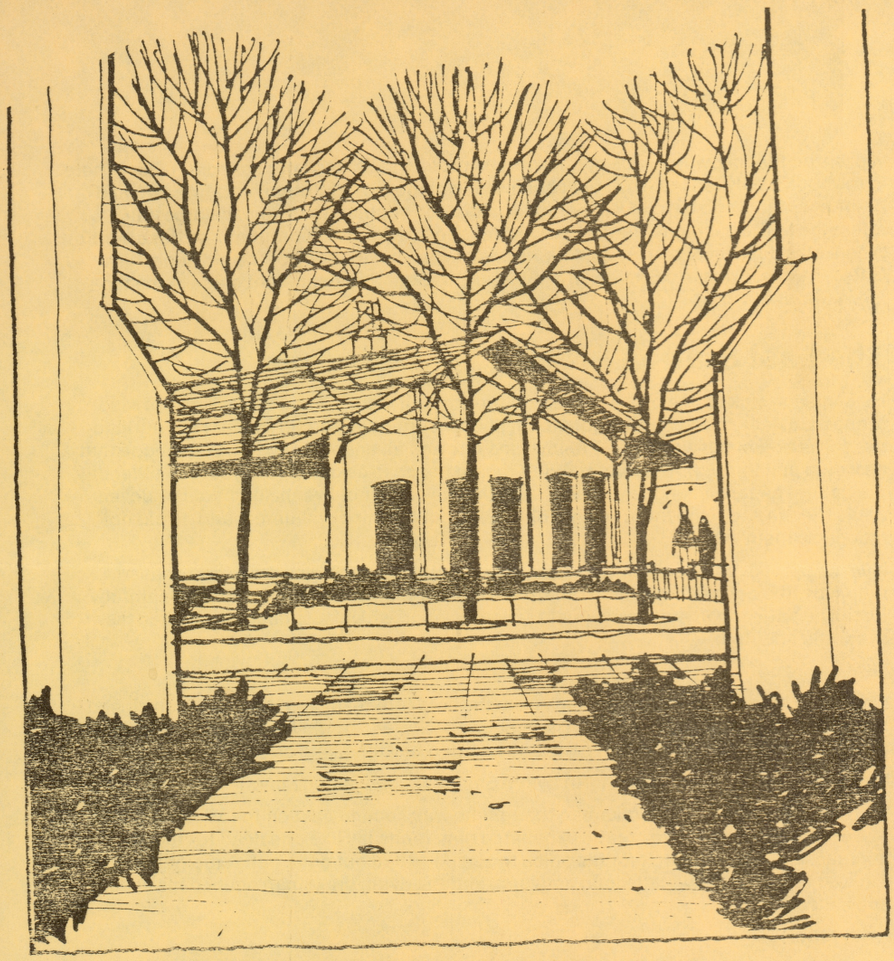
He was so quiet after that that all the men gathered around the bed believing that he was dead. His eyes closed, and the brakeman lifted his hand, moved his head, and whispered: —

"De—"

Not "Detroit," but Death! He died with the half-uttered whisper on his lips. And the headlight on death's engine shone full in his face, and covered it with such pallor as naught but death can bring.



INSIDE CABOOSE 485, conductor Willie Saucier has prepared a "squirrel feast" in October 1979 from meat he shot himself on the opening day of squirrel season. The mid-day meal at Bastrop is prepared jambalaya-style with carrots, rice, sweet potatoes, purple-hulled peas, cornbread, custard pudding and iced tea. Seated from left to right are engineer Ken Berry, rear brakeman Levi Williams and head brakeman Ricky Butler. That's Willie, himself, pouring the tea, with fireman Jim McManus standing beside him. Seated at right is brakeman Billy Jones off the 8:00 a.m. Bastrop Switcher, joining the road crew for lunch.



Winter Market in the Freight House

Few though the ambiance created in the year-old Farmers' Market could be improved upon, but when the producers moved into the freight house on November first, the effect was amazing to the many regular weekly shoppers: warmed by several woodburning, pot-bellied stoves, the Michigan produce was exhibited in indoor stalls, light sparkling through both new and antique transom windows above the former freight-loading doors.

Coffee, pies and doughnuts are served in the coffee shop at the multi-windowed south end of the building. More than twenty-five community volunteers have labored to ready the 100-year-old building and space has been maintained at the North end for a variety of community events. Already, an antique auction has taken place and dances, plays and concerts are planned for what could easily become a new community center for Ypsilanti.

Market Manager, Nancy Cudney, maintains an office in one corner of the coffee shop and invites us all to keep the Market on our regular shopping calendar, every Wednesday and Saturday, all year 'round.

Old Town
RESTAURANT

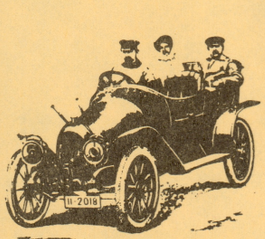
home-cooked
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Specials
in historic depot town
Ypsilanti

Specialists in Framing &
Finishing All Types of Art
RIVER ARTWORKS
50 E. Cross
"Depot Town"
482-8785
Tues-Thurs 10 - 7:30
Fri-Sat 10-6:00
GALLERY OF LOCAL ARTISTS

SIDETRACK
GOOD MUSIC
GOOD FRIENDS
AND GOOD DRINK
and Now Good Food
56 E. Cross
Depot Town

Spear Genius
Personalized Geometric
Hair Designs
By Kathy
483-1305 482-3633

Ted's Auto Electric
307 N. River Street
Phone: 483-1238



Depot Town Association, Inc.
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

depot town